

Homeopathy in a clinical setting of Integrated Medicine for inpatients in an Italian public hospital. Report of four years of activity

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The Centre for Integrated Medicine of Pitigliano, Tuscany region, was founded in 2011 in order to provide assistance and to carry out scientific research projects to measure usefulness of homeopathy.

In four years of activity we have measured outcomes to evaluate the importance and usefulness of conventional therapies integrated with homeopathy to treat inpatients and outpatients.

In particular:

- the difficulty to join an innovative setting of Integrated Medicine by the medical and nursing staff on duty
- the level of acceptance and appreciation from the inpatients
- the features of the outpatients who are visited in integrated care
- the benefits of integrated cares in the clinical conditions of the inpatients

Results: The project is still in progress despite the initial partial contrariety of some doctors in the hospital and some external family doctors in the area. The positive experience was confirmed by the high approval gained from many health personnel and hospital patients. The measured outcome are extremely positive, with a great improvement on QoL and they will be illustrated in details.

Effectiveness of the concomitant use of psychotropic pharmaceuticals and individualized homeopathic treatment: a Delphi study

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Introduction: The use of psychotropic pharmaceuticals such as anti-depressants, anxiolytics, anti-psychotics and stimulants has greatly increased in the past two decades. Every homeopath who sees patients with psychiatric diagnoses encounters many patients on these types of medications. The effectiveness of the concomitant use of pharmaceuticals and homeopathic remedies is an issue frequently asked about by patients. Although published individual case reports exist, the question has not yet been addressed in any depth in the published literature. There is currently no consensus or body of research addressing whether individualized homeopathic treatment is equally effective for patients concurrently taking psychotropic pharmaceuticals as for those taking none.

Aim: The primary aim of this study is to investigate the experience and opinion of homeopathic experts as to whether the use of individualized homeopathic treatment by patients also taking psychotropic medications is effective.

Method: Expert homeopaths with extensive experience were invited to participate in a discussion process known as a Delphi study. Delphi is a structured communication method for soliciting expert opinion about complex problems through the use of questionnaires and controlled feedback. The aim of a Delphi study is to develop expert consensus around an emerging subject about which there is controversy or insufficient information.

Results: 8 homeopaths participated in two rounds of questionnaires leading to the development of consensus statements. Statements were generated regarding the effectiveness of homeopathic treatment used simultaneously with psychotropic pharmaceuticals; specific posology adjustments required; and the effectiveness of individualized homeopathic treatment for weaning down on psychotropic medications.

Conclusion: It is the opinion of this panel that individualized homeopathic treatment can be clinically effective for patients concurrently taking or weaning down on psychotropic medication. Pharmaceutical use provides challenges to case analysis and posology choice, but there is a wealth of expert case management experience that has yet to be systematically explored.

Keywords: Individualized homeopathic treatment, Psychotropic pharmaceuticals, Delphi, Psychiatry

Retrospective observational study of people with HIV and AIDS receiving homeopathic treatment in Swaziland

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The purpose of this ongoing research is to investigate the effectiveness of homeopathic treatment delivered to HIV-positive patients mainly in resource-limited settings. The study includes patients on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) and those not yet initiated on ART, in Swaziland. Data from the Swaziland Homeopathy Project, 2014 clinic database was analysed.

The study is a retrospective observational study of a group of 1003 HIV positive individuals comprising 147 males and 856 females. Patients attend clinics voluntarily and are offered homeopathic treatment as a complement to any other conventional medical treatment. Statistical analysis was carried out using the Standard Student t-test. The end points are changes in the Practitioner and Patient overall scores (based on Karnofsky) and Symptom Evaluation Scale (VAS) scores.

The analysis showed statistically significant positive changes in **all** average overall health scores of the patients between initial case-taking prior to remedy prescription and follow-up consultations. Mean patient scores for patients on ART increased by 1.18 points (from 6.11 to 7.29) on the 9-point Karnofsky scale (p value < 0.01). Mean patient scores for those not on ART increased by 0.94 points, from 6.30 to 7.24 (p value < 0.01). Practitioner scores showed similar increases. From all the overall health scores, an average of **66%** of the patients showed improvement at the first monthly follow-up. Analysis of the symptoms indicated that symptom improvement occurred in **65%** of all presenting symptoms at first follow-up. This trend was observed for both mental and physical symptoms.

The study indicates that all patients, including those receiving ART and those not yet initiated, were significantly improved after receiving homeopathic treatment. Symptom analysis indicates that homeopathic treatment can alleviate both long and short-term ART adverse effects including peripheral neuropathy and is effective in addressing emotional issues such as grief and trauma as well as opportunistic infections.

Keywords: Outreach homeopathic treatment, Observational study, HIV-positive patients, Antiretroviral Therapy (ART), Overall scores, Symptom scores, Statistically significant improvement

Study design of a Randomized, Placebo Controlled Trial of the Homeopathic Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

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Background: ADHD is a common psychiatric disorder affecting 5–10% of children and youth. Conventional treatments for ADHD are effective in treating acute symptoms but have shown little long term benefit and have a troublesome adverse event profile. Homeopathic treatments for ADHD have shown promise however the therapeutic effects are unknown. Homeopathic randomized, placebo controlled trial (RPCT) are difficult to design. The homeopathic research community has conducted many such RPCT's and valuable lessons have been learned.

Methods: Our study team has designed a study of the homeopathic treatment of ADHD which we feel may address more rigorously the questions around internal, external and model validity in homeopathic trials. We have designed a 3 arm (verum, placebo, waitlist) RPCT after conducting an open label pilot study. The pilot study enabled the study team to determine feasibility, optimal length of time needed for treatment, and to make a sample size calculation on the treatment-waitlist arms. The current study has a treatment phase of 28 weeks (8 consultations) and intends to enroll 59 participants per arm. One key element of the design of the study was to retain the same clinicians for both the pilot phase and the RCT phase so that the sample size calculation may more accurately reflect a particular standard of practice. Furthermore, the practitioners were chosen based (in part) by their lack of reputation and popularity in the community. This has the potential to reduce certain biases (such as reputational, popularity, and hot stuff biases) allowing for the potential of more robust results. To optimize model validity both the pilot study and the RPCT had continuous input from the homeopaths with regards to emulating their standard practice with the clinical aspects of the trial. Very few modifications were introduced and the homeopaths did not feel that these modifications would affect patient outcomes.

Keywords: Homeopathy, ADHD, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Effectiveness of homeopathic remedies in severe laminitic horses

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Background: Equine laminitis is a severe inflammation of the internal lamellar of the horse foot due to an alteration of the periferic vascular flood flow. Marked vascular disturbances occur and microtrombi form in the digital